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Atari Online News, Etc.
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->From the Editor's Keyboard "Saying it like it is!"
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Well, the elections - political candidates and referendums - are over. For better or worse, the people have spoken. Here in Massachusetts, the elected candidates went exactly as I figured that they would, including one of my choices that did not win. I won't get into the various "read between the lines" rationale behind "blue vs. red" state victories and losses - I'll leave that discussion to the politically-inclined. As far as I'm concerned, it will all come out in the wash in the end. Let's hope that the choices made this time around result in some positive results.

Other than that, it's been a strange past couple of weeks - and not all that fun. I really hate going to the dentist, and related specialties. I've never liked going - and my father was a dentist. It obviously shows as I've been going through some serious dental work the past couple of weeks, with more planned. It's not something I'm looking forward to go through. But, it's the price one pays for bad habits!

Otherwise, I'm fighting a winning battle with nature this year. I'm managing to keep up with the deluge of falling leaves. I'm usually finishing up just before the first snowfall, if I'm lucky. Maybe one more pass in another week and this annual right of autumn will be over. I'm also hoping for at least one or two more rounds of golf before I put the clubs away for the winter. It's been a great year for me with many opportunities to get out on the course and play. I can't say that my playing skills have vastly improved, but it's been extremely enjoyable to be able to play more than a half dozen times like the past twenty years or so.

So, while I'm working out the kinks from another day on the links, I'll let you all dive into this week's issue.

Until next time...

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING
compiled by Joe Mirando
joe@atarinews.org

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Another week has come and gone, and we find ourselves closer to Thanksgiving Day. My wife and I are having Thanksgiving dinner here at our place for her family this year, and I've got to tell ya... I'm not looking forward to it.

First of all, we haven't gotten the house into shape yet. Since both of us work it's been tough getting things whipped into shape.

Second, I will be doing all of the cooking. My wife, you see, is only in charge of cooking meat products weighing less than 1/4 pound before cooking. [chuckle]

All in all, I don't mind 'the family thing'. I'm from a rather large family, and I grew up accustomed to having tons of people around for occasions like Thanksgiving.... I just didn't have to shoulder the responsibility for everyone's good time.

Anyway, now that the countdown timer is running, I've got my work cut out for me. Wish me luck.

Let's get to the news, hints, tips and info available from the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup

'Ian' asks for help in identifying something in his Falcon:

"I'm having some trouble identifying an 'accelerator' mod on a Falcon MB. This appears to be a clock booster for the bus etc and is a green module (sealed) with several wires. There is also two wires attached to an LED. There are no labels on the unit which is about 3" by 1" in size and its stuck to the MB. Any idea what this might be? It must work OK as the Falcon boots normally, but I'm guessing there is a driver required to turn the accelerator on?"

Then he (evidently) posts that he...

"found out a bit more ....
Looks like its a Power Up or Power Up 2 accelerator that boosts your cpu from 16Mhz to 32Mhz. I think it needs a cpx to turn it on, anyone help ?"

'Maurice' tells Ian:

"I've posted the control programs & PowerUp2 cpx on Atari Forum. Also included a German review of PowerUp2 accelerator with a rough translation.

Go to this address: http://www.atari-forum.com/viewtopic.php?t=8920 "

Ian (I think... he's switched to the name 'jammer') tells Maurice:

"I've the same on my Falcon.
There's also a red LED to the left of the F1 key, is this part of it ?

I was going to post a message on Atari Forum asking if anyone could help, but haven't got round to it yet. There must be someone who knows some more about it."

'JamesD' adds:

"Sounds like a powerUP2 accelerator, basically a clock doubler, runs the CPU at 32Mhz.

You put a program in your AUTO folder called powerup2ON.prg (or similar) to switch it on and rename the program (substitute OFF for ON) to switch it off.

Very simple to use although my LED doesn't work any more on mine the accelerator is still ok."

'Mike' asks for help with the Milan computers:

"Recently purchased a Milan 040 main board. I have a couple of XC 68060's and adapters manufactured by:
http://tinyurl.com/y75gro [URL converted by Editor] to upgrade the machine.

I've read a couple of web sites, the installation sounds straightforward as far as setting up the Milan for the 060 goes, as long as the adapter is compatible. I tried using it on an Afterburner, and could get the Falcon to boot with the diagnostic cartridge and run test, but TOS wouldn't boot, guessing because the first few lines of code contain illegal instructions for the 060. Purchased a new ROM, but never got anyone to patch 4.04 so I could burn and try it. I'm fairly coding ill literate..... My CT060 still sits un installed until a PCI bus is available, or Apex is patched :(

I've also a couple of clocks, the high spec low skew little suckers that I would like to play around with on the CPU, but not sure if the CPU clock is asynchronous (think that is the correct term). I've downloaded the schematics, but they are not the detail needed like the Falcon schematics in the Field Service Manual.

There was discussion concerning PC tower power supplies and the power ramp up time causing problems with video card initialization. Any tips on what to shop for when looking at tower cases and power supplies for the Milan?

Don't know what version flash the motherboard has, so the plan is to assemble the kit, and boot with the 040 first to examine the system.

There is no hard disk, the Milan System CD is V1.27 and floppy with what says is Milan O/S 1.2.

The latest HD Driver I have is V7.12 (Uwe can correct me on this, I'm registered :)).

I have SCSI Tools, CD Tools, Kabold 2.5 and Extendos as well.

The main board came with a PCI S3 Trio64 video card, looks to be 4 meg.

I have the ET-4000 compatible version of NVDI, and an ET-4000 Jakarta PCI Jazz V video card with PC, S-Video, composite out, audio out and audio in. If the ET-4000 is compatible, the other features of the card might give me something to play with at old age if the ET-4000 chip set is compatible with the Milan :)

I'm very happy running NAES V1.2, MiNT and what ever desk top tickles my fancy at the time. Thing works well for me. Terra Desk is cool too.

I'm hoping the Dyna Cadd, Calamus SL, GT Look, Das Vector, Out Line Art, Pagestream, Papyrus, Phase 4, Cyber Series, EB Model, NeoN, POV, Photoline, and many others keep me happy until I'm dead and buried."

Michael Schwingen tells Mike:

"Not sure about this adapter - we produced our own adapter for the Milan, but I guess the ET adapter is basically the same and should work on the Milan.

"Good idea [about assembling the kit]. A certain minimum version of Bootblock and TOS is required to support the 060, so you should first upgrade Bootblock and TOS to a current version before plugging in the 060. After that, the machine should boot up fine (at least with empty auto folder).

Integer 68060 emulation code is contained in the current TOS, for Floating point applications, you will need the fpu__2m.prg in the auto folder.

Current TOS and bootblock are available from http://www.ccac.rwth-aachen.de/~michaels/index.php/milan "

Djordje Vukovic posts this about TeraDesk:

"Version 3.86 of TeraDesk open-source desktop for the 16-bit and 32-bit lines of Atari computers is available at:

http://solair.eunet.yu/~vdjole/teradesk.htm

This release fixes a bug in the implementation of the AV-protocol. See the history file for more information. Have fun."

Mark Bedingfield tells Djordje:

"Thanks mate. Having trouble keeping up with you at the moment. [grin]

Is it worth reloading with the new Easymint files? Starting fresh?"

Mark Duckworth posts this about GEM Instant Messenger:

"I'd like to report that GEM Instant Messenger version 1.0 is well under way. Much of the code is being rewritten to be more pluggable. I'm happy to report that initial plugging in of the new libfaim code is working!

This means:

server side buddy lists
multiple logins and interaction with Aim System
more features, including file transfers chats etc

Server side buddy lists also work, and work implicitly right now...

This should also mean:
STiK support coming soon
MagiC support coming soon (I *hope*, not sure yet)
End of the infamous full cpu bug that affects not only the latest versions ataricq but gim as well.

The alpha that I've got running now is already pretty snazzy. Using the help of zview codecs I plan to snazz up the UI a whole lot.

After that I plan to finish up SUM and sparemint and give a full forward push to get it deployed on the live sparemint site.

In the mean time I've also started analyzing the mint kernel and am going to try my hand at implementing swap memory and BSD UVM. Mikro, if you're alive, I'd love to see what you've done on this so far."

Joakim Högberg asks Mark:

"I am quite curious, what is the "infamous cpu bug" that AtarICQ supposedly suffers from?"

Mark replies:

"Well it could have been fixed in newer versions, but it's definitely something caused by libfaim at least on my system. CPU time starts getting sucked down after you let it sit an hour or so. I'll have to verify it exists on newer versions. Didn't mean to put down your software or anything :-P If it exists, I know it's not your fault.

AND I just found out it's doing it with newer versions too."

Joakim tells Mark:

"Well, the OVL of AtarICQ doesn't use libfaim."

Well folks, that's it for this time around. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - Gamers Give PS3 Rave Reviews!
"""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""" Deciding Console War Winner!

Pro Gamer Says Not All Fun!
Atari Safe? And much more!

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!
"""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""

Gamers Give PlayStation 3 Rave Reviews

Crammed in the corner of a hotel's banquet hall, they stood and stared silently, mesmerized by what they were seeing. They were watching a soldier gunning down a giant monster on one TV and Miami Heat's Dwayne Wade taking over an NBA game on the other screen. What they were really experiencing was the new Sony PlayStation 3.

The much-awaited video game console comes out Nov. 17 in the U.S., although getting one will be as challenging as finding parking at the mall after Thanksgiving.

Thousands of lucky gamers tested the PS3 over the weekend at the 2007 Sony Expo in Honolulu, two weeks before the debut.

Almost all were males - from boys with braces and baggy jeans to gray-haired baby boomers. They crowded around two gaming booths with the sleek, lean, black machine behind a plastic case.

"The graphics are crazy, way better than the second one," said Doug Morrison, a 20-year-old University of Hawaii student. "It's more realistic. It's smoother. It doesn't have any glitches.

"I'm going to get one no matter what."

Forget Elmo, the third-generation PlayStation will top many wish lists to Santa this holiday season. And hopefully Santa saved because the PS3 isn't cheap. The system starts at $500 for a 20 GB version. The price tag on the 60 GB model is $600.

People looking to cash in on the high demand and limited supply are already selling their pre-reserved PS3 consoles on eBay for well over $2,000. Rights to one PS3 recently sold for $3,250, plus $50 for shipping. It received 48 bids. Some stores began taking pre-orders on Oct. 10. At some GameStop and EB Game locations, the orders were snapped up within minutes.

Kazuo Hirai, chief executive of Sony Computer Entertainment America, said about 400,000 units will be available in the U.S. in the initial launch and an additional 600,000 by the end of this year.

Sony hopes to have a total of 2 million consoles in the U.S. market by the end of company's fiscal year, which ends in March.

"Unfortunately, there are going to be some shortages," Hirai said in an interview. "I ask for everybody's patience. We are pedal to the metal in

terms of trying to get as many units as possible into both the Japanese and American market."

Hirai said he doesn't even have a PS3 at home yet, even though his 12-year-old son has been begging for one.

"He talks a good game about PlayStation 3 when he's at school, but he hasn't touched one and he hasn't seen one," Hirai said. "That's only fair for everybody."

With his back turned to Sony's new $7,000 TV, Robert McDuffie and his buddies were glued to a much smaller screen, watching someone play the first-person shooting game "Resistance: Fall of Man."

The 25-year-old Army sergeant from Daytona Beach, Fla. said he didn't attend the expo to check out Sony's new line of high-definition TVs, tiny digital cameras or ultrathin laptops.

"I came for the PS3," he said, anxiously waiting for a moment with the machine. After playing for a few minutes, McDuffie said he was impressed.

"I'm just trying to figure out how to get one," he said. "I didn't pre-order, so I'm going to have to stand in line overnight."

The PS3 is driven by a high-powered cell processor, making game play super smooth and graphics amazingly detailed. A gigabit ethernet for online gaming and a Blu-ray disc player comes standard on the console, as does a wireless controller.

The PS3 can play games and movies at "1080p," which is the highest definition resolution currently available.

But Sony has already experienced problems in developing the PS3. Sony reported a $366 million operating loss in its gaming division in the third quarter because of development charges. The launch in Europe was delayed until March 2007 because of mass production problems in the Blu-ray drive.

Tim Mah, 13, of Honolulu had one word for the new machine: "Wow."

Dyron Mack, a 35-year-old computer analyst, said he plans to buy a PS3 without consulting his wife or disclosing the cost.

"I'm not going to tell her. You just show up with it and let her be mad," he said. "You just say, 'I'm sorry. I lost the receipt.'"

Atari Ships Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2 For Playstation 2

Atari, Inc. announced Wednesday that Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2 for PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system has shipped to retail stores nationwide. The Dragon Ball Z video game series is the gold standard of anime-based video games, and continues to deliver engrossing and spectacular action to its passionate fan-base. This loyal community is set to expand with the release of Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2, the ultimate DBZ experience for the PlayStation 2.

Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2 hits the ground running to give fans

and fighting game enthusiasts a remarkable fighting experience by delivering ferocious, high-octane, one-on-one battling in massive destructible 3D environments. Featuring over 120 playable characters, Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2 offers the highest character roster of any fighting game to date. The game’s visuals have reached a new peak of excellence contributing to dazzling and absorbing fast-paced gameplay.

Tips & Tricks Magazine says that this "latest addition to the popular Budokai series can be summed up in three words: bigger, better, badder!" Emily Anadu, Product Manager, Atari, Inc. agrees, "The DBZ video games just keep getting better, and Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2 is the latest testament. Fans will love the incredible interactive environments, the addition of characters never-before-seen in the video games, and the ability to engage in tag battles and new attacks. For those who haven’t yet battled in the DBZ universe, Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2 is a great place to start because it incorporates more of the mythology than any other game to date."

In Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2 players can try out new vanishing attacks and also trigger transformations exactly as those in the DBZ anime TV series and movies. Nine game modes include tag team battle and multiplayer allow players to challenge their friends to battle in all the visual and technical splendor of the DBZ universe, with more energy, thrills and explosive action than ever.

Baby Boomers, Women May Decide Winner of Console Wars

As Sony and its rivals prepare for battle with super-fast, realistic new consoles, analysts say that grey-haired seniors, aging baby boomers and women gamers may hold the key to who wins the war.

The PlayStation 3 finally hits the shelves in Japan Saturday as the latest addition to Sony’s hugely-popular series which has sold more than 200 million machines worldwide since the original version was introduced in the mid-1990s. Japanese rival Nintendo will roll out its answer to next-generation gaming, the Wii, in December, while Microsoft’s Xbox 360 has already been on the shelves for a year.

All three firms are increasingly setting their sights on non-traditional game players to dominate - and expand - the 25-billion-dollar global market with more user-friendly controllers and diverse games.

The console makers earn much of their money from software and licensing sales so the more games bought by family members, the more profits they make.

"Light users or non-gamers cannot be ignored. They are like swing voters, who often hold the key," said Masashi Morita, a senior analyst at Okasan Securities.

"In order to win the battle, the makers have to attract both conventional and non-conventional customers in the end," Morita said.

The ranks of video gamers have already swelled after Nintendo struck a bonanza with its mega-hit "Brain Training" software, which checks the ages of players’ brains by quizzing them on math, reading and other simple tasks.

Console makers are also trying to woo non-traditional gamers, including women, by marketing their machines as home entertainment centres allowing users to store digital photos and browse the Internet.

Sony also recently announced plans for a pink PlayStation 2 and PlayStation Portable to try to attract girl gamers.

Current game players are a lucrative market, said Eiji Maeda, senior analyst at Daiwa Institute of Research, "But non-game players have strong potential". Nintendo has sold more than 6.5 million copies of "Brain Training" games in Japan and two million overseas, mainly to people in their 30s or older.

"I have no interest in shooting or role-playing," said Yurie Oguma, a 38-year-old bank employee who has begun playing video games with the software. "This game is fun because it’s not fighting but training myself and enhancing my knowledge," she said. "I have not seen upcoming new machines, but I may try them if they are fun to play with my child."

Nintendo has caused a stir with its innovative new Wii handset shaped like a television remote control and engineered with motion sensors and speakers which it hopes to use to attract non-traditional customers.

Sony, however, has long dominated the home video-game market and shipments of the original PlayStation and the PS2 have both topped 100 million.

While the emphasis of the PS3 is on chip power, the electronics giant says the machine is targeted at all the family.

"PlayStation has always, since we launched the original PlayStation in 1994, targeted everyone as our audience," said Yoshiko Furusawa, vice president of Corporate Communications of Sony Computer Entertainment.

"Back in 1994 people’s perceptions were that game consoles were for kids. We wanted to break that perception and make computer entertainment available for every generation," she said.

Analysts, however, say Sony appears to put more emphasis on traditional gaming fans.

"Sony’s strategy seems contrary to Nintendo’s," Daiwa’s Maeda said. "Sony is targeting its own customers first with its state-of-art technology, while Nintendo is trying to explore new customers. Xbox goes in between."

At 49,980 yen (423 dollars) for the standard 20-gigabyte hard disc, the PS3 is twice the price of Nintendo’s Wii at 25,000 yen.

"The PS3 initially will be purchased by the core gamers because of its high retail price," said David Gibson, analyst at Macquarie Securities.

"The Wii is very much a cheap gaming machine that’s trying to appeal to predominantly new users," he added.

Baby boomers may offer a potentially lucrative market, but they are not always easy to woo.

"I used to play simple video games such as ping-pong or mahjong," said 65-year-old pensioner Mitsuo Muramatsu.

"But I can’t enjoy playing recent games, which require speed and complicated controlling. They only frustrate me."

Atari Safe... For Now

It’s no secret that Atari and French parent company Infogrames have been facing hard times. In the U.S. Atari seems constantly to be under the threat of a Nasdaq delisting, and during fiscal 2006 losses piled up to almost $70 million. Despite the continued struggles, Infogrames chief executive Bruno Bonnell remains optimistic that the company can be turned around. He insisted that he will not jump ship.

Bonnell, who is looking to get shareholders’ approval for a debt refinancing plan, said he would stay on board at the beleaguered publisher. In fact, according to Reuters he told a chat session on the website of French daily paper Les Echos that when Atari releases its first-half earnings on Thursday, signs of a recovery would already be evident.

"A captain does not abandon the ship in the midst of a storm," declared Bonnell.

"If we need to reorganize the management of the company, I will be open to it, but only once we have restored financial stability that will allow management to build a solid platform and not, as it is the case today, to tactically react to financial deadlines."

He continued, "We will unveil figures for our American first-half that will confirm the recovery of our operations."

This news closely follows today’s announcement that Atari has secured a new $15 million revolving credit facility with Guggenheim Corporate Funding, LLC. According to Atari, "Guggenheim credit facility will provide funding for its current and reasonably foreseeable capital requirements as it relates to working capital needs in the ordinary course of business."

"The Guggenheim facility provides Atari with the working capital flexibility to support our day-to-day operations," explained newly appointed Atari President and CEO David Pierce. "Guggenheim is a prestigious financial partner and Atari looks forward to building on this partnership as we continue to execute on our strategy."

Professional Video Gamer Says It’s Not All Fun

Professional video gamer Tom Taylor, aka Tsquared, is the envy of every young video game player but he wants to debunk the myth that wielding a joystick for a living is all fun and games.

The self-taught player, who has been playing competitively since aged 14 and turned pro at 16, dropped out of school to concentrate on building a career in gaming.

Taylor, 19, now earns $120,000 to $150,000 a year between prize money reaped playing "Halo 2" and Gaming-lessons.com, an online site he founded

last year to teach people gaming skills - and he is about to almost double the hourly tutoring rate he charges.

But he says he has had to be disciplined to succeed, sometimes playing games for up to 12 hours a day ahead of competitions and sticking to an exercise regime and good diet to keep a mental and physical edge.

"A lot of people think playing video games isn't a lot of work. It doesn't leave a lot of time for vacation. In five years I've never had any personal downtime for myself," Taylor, told Reuters.

Putting in the hours has paid off for Taylor.

In June 2004 he signed a $250,000 contract with professional league Major League Gaming and as team leader of Str8 Rippin, he is one of the league's top-ranked players.

He appears on Stuff Magazine's list of the 20 most influential people under the age of 30 and after the MLG National Championships in Las Vegas later this month, he's raising his video game tutoring rate to $115 an hour from $65. Taylor is also shifting to a different screen soon with USA Networks, which will start airing coverage of the MLG 2006 Pro Circuit on November 11. The TV series chronicles the eight-month competition that culminates in Nevada's "Sin City," where gamers will battle for the title and a $234,000 purse.

Jupiter, Florida-based Taylor, whose handle started out as T and evolved to T2 - Tsquared - says he now finds himself at home just seven to 10 days a month between traveling for competitions, training, media appearances or personal reasons.

But while his work schedule has decimated his personal time, he admits the publicity has its benefits.

"I guess it works to your advantage," he said when asked if his profile with women has been enhanced by his rising fame.

On an average day, Taylor plays two to three hours of video games - a session that usually starts after 11 p.m.. That time investment jumps to 10 to 12 hours ahead of tournaments.

If he's not training, he puts in a couple hours teaching game lessons, blogging and returning fan e-mail.

Taylor works to keep a mental and physical edge with running, weight lifting and eating well. He also limits energy drinks like Red Bull to competitions.

While Taylor says no age is too old to be a pro gamer, he admits the average competitor is college-aged.

"You'll notice that there are not too many people over 30 placing well at the tournaments," said Taylor, who isn't spending much time worrying about his life post pro gaming.

"I try to focus on what's ahead of me when I'm in tournaments instead of daydreaming about what's going to happen 15 years down the road," he said.

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Voting System Worked, With Some Hiccups

There were occasional hiccups in the nation's all-too-human system voting systems - long lines in Denver, slow election machines in Ohio, a longshot Texas candidate who briefly, and incorrectly, enjoyed a big lead - but no major breakdowns.

"Overall it looks like all the predictions of disaster turned out wrong," said Doug Lewis, executive director of Election Center, a nonpartisan organization of state election officials.

Experts cautioned against complacency as states continue to adjust to their new electronic voting equipment, though. Several states are still likely to face recounts, including in two tight races that could determine control of the U.S. Senate.

"I don't think we're in the clear," Michael Alvarez, a political science professor at the California Institute of Technology, said Wednesday. "Even 24 months from now, many of these states and counties will continue struggling with these issues."

More than 80 percent of the nation's voters cast some type of electronic ballot on Tuesday - the deadline for major reforms mandated by the federal Help America Vote Act, passed by Congress after the 2000 election debacle in Florida.

There were complaints of dirty election tricks. Some voters reported intimidating phone calls, misleading sample ballots and an armed man questioning Hispanic voters outside a precinct.

Some of the longest delays were in Denver, where hundreds of voters waited long past the 7 p.m. voting deadline at besieged polling centers. It was a miserable end to a day fraught with new voting machine problems and the longest statewide ballot in decades.

"This is positively ridiculous," said Jack McCroskey, who leaned on a cane while waiting to vote. "At 82, I don't deserve to have to stand out here."

Voter intimidation accusations prompted others to claim that some voters were bullied from getting a chance to vote.

In Virginia, where Republican George Allen battled Democrat Jim Webb in a tight Senate race, the FBI was looking at intimidation complaints from voters who reported they received telephone calls warning them to stay home on Election Day or face criminal charges.

In Arizona, three men, one of them armed, stopped and questioned Hispanic voters outside a Tucson precinct, according to voting monitors for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, which photographed

the incidents and reported them to the FBI.

In Maryland, sample ballots suggesting Republican Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich and Senate candidate Michael Steele were Democrats were distributed by people bused in from out of state. Democrats outnumber Republicans in Maryland by nearly 2-to-1.

An Ehrlich spokeswoman said the fliers were meant to show the candidates had the support of some state Democrats. They were paid for by the campaigns of Ehrlich, Steele and the GOP. Some of the fliers include pictures of Ehrlich with Democrat Kweisi Mfume, a former NAACP president. Both Republican candidates lost.

In some states, the effort to improve the integrity of the election system got off to a shaky start. Long lines formed in Ohio, Illinois and South Carolina, but voting apparently smoothed out.

U.S. District Court Judge Dan A. Polster in Ohio ordered polls stay open for an extra 90 minutes, after the Ohio Democratic Party sued Cuyahoga County because of crowded precincts.

The county, home to Cleveland, suffered 14-hour voting lines in 2004. On Tuesday, problems with ballot-reading machines caused delays of little more than an hour. It was the first time that all 88 Ohio counties used electronic voting - either touch-screens or paper ballots that were electronically scanned.

In Texas, election officials recounted ballots after a computer glitch incorrectly showed longshot Constitution party candidate Ron Avery ahead by a large margin in the race for a House of Representatives seat. The winner was really Democratic incumbent Henry Cuellar.

Some precincts in Illinois’ Cook County had trouble electronically transmitting results, so cartridges containing tabulated vote totals were taken to the county clerk’s office in downtown Chicago. The county board president’s race remained undecided Wednesday morning.

Not just regular folks reported being unable to vote.

Chelsea Clinton was turned away at a Manhattan polling site because her name did not appear in a book of registered voters, according to her mother, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton. Chelsea was offered an affidavit vote, similar to provisional ballots used in other states.

In South Carolina, Gov. Mark Sanford was rebuffed because he didn’t have a voter registration card. He later returned with it.

According to an exit poll of 11,798 voters conducted for AP and television networks by Edison Media Research and Mitofsky International, about 46 percent of voters said they felt "very confident" their votes will be counted accurately. In 2004, that figure was 50 percent.

But Florida showed a significant increase - 47 percent of voters were "very confident" in their states’ ability to count votes, up from 38 percent in 2004. Though it was the site of the voting debacle of 2000, Florida has had relatively smooth elections since, including Tuesday’s midterm election.

The campaigning group Reporters Without Borders (RSF) on Monday listed 13 countries it labelled as "enemies of the Internet" ahead of a 24 hour campaign in favour of free access to the web.

The 13 countries are: Saudi Arabia, Belarus, Myanmar, China, North Korea, Cuba, Egypt, Iran, Uzbekistan, Syria, Tunisia, Turkmenistan and Vietnam.

Three countries were removed from RSF's 2005 list - Libya, the Maldives and Nepal.

However the inclusion of Egypt was because "President Hosni Mubarak is displaying an authoritarianism towards the Internet that is particularly worrying," RSF said - noting the recent imprisonment of three pro-democracy bloggers.

From Tuesday at 10H00 GMT RSF is asking the public to register on its Internet site in "defense of on-line free expression and the fate of bloggers in repressive countries."

China: Web Censorship Report Groundless

The Chinese government said Wednesday accusations by a press freedom group it was one of the worst culprits of systematic online censorship were "groundless" and that its citizens could freely access the Internet.

China was one of 13 countries singled out by Reporters Without Borders in a 24-hour online protest Wednesday against Internet censorship. The others were: Belarus, Cuba, Egypt, Iran, Myanmar, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

"We find these accusations groundless," said an officer at the Chinese Foreign Ministry's spokesman's office who declined to be named.

"The Chinese enjoy free access to the Internet and they can have the information they need. Currently, the information the Chinese people get is far more than before the introduction of the Internet in this country."

China has the world's second-largest population of Internet users after the United States, with more than 123 million people online. Though the Communist government promotes Internet use, it has also set up an extensive surveillance and filtering system to prevent Chinese from accessing material considered obscene or politically subversive.

The government said its management of the Internet complied with international standards.

"As in other countries, the Internet is managed according to international standards, the law, and the self-management of Internet service providers," the Foreign Ministry duty officer said.

But the Paris-based group, Reporters Sans Frontieres in French, said in its annual report that out of 61 people worldwide who have been imprisoned for posting what the countries claimed was "subversive" content, 52 were in China. Earlier this year, the Chinese government denied that anyone has been arrested for Internet postings, despite a series of dissidents jailed in

recent years for online comments criticizing corruption and calling for democratic change.

"No one should ever be prevented from posting news online or writing a blog," said the group, which taps more than 100 journalists who are "keeping us informed."

The cyberspace demonstration was advertised in Manhattan - in Times Square and in Bryant Park - on truck-transported billboards. As of Tuesday afternoon, 10,000 people had registered their protest, with black holes on the group's Web site gradually disappearing with each click, said Lucie Morillon, the group's spokeswoman in Washington.

The 13 countries "censor and block online content that criticizes them," the organization said in defining its protest. "Multinationals such as Yahoo! cooperate with the Chinese government in filtering the Internet and tracking down cyber-dissidents."

Reporters Without Borders said it obtained a copy of the verdict in the case of Jiang Lijun, sentenced to four years in prison in November 2003 for his online pro-democracy articles in China. Reporters Without Borders said that the search engine company Yahoo! Inc. had helped Chinese police identify him.

"It's one thing to turn a blind eye to censorship - it's another thing to collaborate," Morillon said.

In a statement, Yahoo! said: "We continue to employ rigorous procedural protections under applicable laws in response to government requests for information, maintaining our commitment to user privacy and compliance with the law."

In Cuba, Reporters Without Borders said, the government "ensures that there is no Internet access for its political opponents and independent journalists, for whom reaching news media abroad is an ordeal."

The punishment for writing "a few counterrevolutionary articles" for foreign Web sites can be years in prison, it said.

Reporters Without Borders said it tracks cases of online repression in various ways, including through court cases and reports of arrests by family and friends.

The nonprofit group, founded in 1985 by French journalist Robert Menard, is 70 percent funded by sales of its magazine, Reporters Without Borders For Press Freedom, which includes photos of journalists in jail. About 200,000 copies are printed three times a year.

Nepal, Maldives and Libya have been removed from Reporters Without Borders' annual list of Internet enemies. But there's an addition to the list, Egypt, where it said "many bloggers were harassed and imprisoned this year."

Government Shuts Down Iraq Docs Site Over Bomb Fears

The U.S. government has shut down a Web site it set up in March containing documents captured during the Iraq war after experts raised concerns it

offered a guide to building an atom bomb, the New York Times reported.

It said the Bush administration started the site under pressure from congressional Republicans who hoped to use the Internet to find new evidence of dangers posed by former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein before the U.S.-led invasion in 2003.

In recent weeks, according to the Times, the site posted documents that weapons experts said contained detailed accounts of Iraq’s secret nuclear research before the 1991 Gulf War that one diplomat called "a cookbook" for building an atom bomb.

On Wednesday night, after the Times informed the government about the concerns, it said the government suspended the site. It quoted a spokesman for the director of national intelligence as saying the site was withdrawn "pending a review to ensure its content is appropriate for public viewing."

A diplomat affiliated with the watchdog International Atomic Energy Agency told Reuters IAEA inspectors were "shocked by the explicitness of the content" on the Web page and a senior agency official conveyed the concerns to U.S. diplomats in Vienna.

But Matthew Boland, spokesman for the U.S. mission to the Vienna-based IAEA, said on Friday: "Ambassador (Gregory) Schulte did not receive any protest or expression of concern from the IAEA on this issue."

Known as "Operation Iraqi Freedom Document Portal," the Web site contained about a dozen documents with charts, diagrams, equations and long narratives about bomb building that nuclear experts told the Times went beyond what was available on the Internet and in other public forums.

The New York Times said the documents provided information on building nuclear firing circuits and triggering explosives as the radioactive cores of atom bombs.

"For the U.S. to toss a match into this flammable area is very irresponsible," A. Bryan Siebert, a former official at the U.S. Energy Department, which runs the country’s nuclear arms program, told the paper.

National intelligence director John Negroponte resisted setting up the Web site, the Times said, but President George W. Bush approved the move after congressional Republicans proposed a bill to require the documents’ release. According to the Times, conservative politicians and publications hoped analysis of the some 48,000 boxes of documents seized in the Iraq invasion would reinvigorate the search for proof Saddam had unconventional arms programs. Bush cited concerns about Saddam’s weapons of mass destruction as a major cause for the Iraq invasion.

No such weapons have been found.

FTC Fines Adware Firm $3 Million

An online media and advertising company accused of unfairly and deceptively downloading its software onto consumers’ computers has agreed to pay a $3 million fine to the Federal Trade Commission.

In a settlement with the FTC, Zango Inc. agreed to clearly notify consumers

and seek their consent before installing its software, which critics call "adware," onto Web surfers' computers. The company said it would also make it easier for consumers to remove the software.

Computer privacy advocates hailed the settlement as a landmark agreement that defines what a company must do to obtain consent before installing software on a user's computer.

"This sends an important message to companies that have built their businesses on the backs of Internet users without any concern for what those users want," said Ari Schwartz, deputy director of the Center for Democracy and Technology. The FTC charged that from 2002 to 2005 Zango distributed its adware through a large network of affiliate companies that promised free content, such as games, screensavers and Web browser upgrades. Zango's advertising software was then bundled with the free content and unknowingly downloaded by the user. The program would monitor the user's Internet surfing and offer pop-up ads based on sites the user visited, the FTC said.

Zango's third-party distributors also exploited gaps in online security systems to install the software without consumers' knowledge and made the program difficult to remove by disguising it, the FTC said. In all, Zango's program was installed on computers over 70 million times and caused more than 6.9 billion pop-up ads to appear, the FTC said in its complaint.

Zango, formerly known as 180solutions, blamed many of the deceptive practices cited by the FTC on its affiliates, which it said it no longer uses. Zango paid the affiliates to include its software with their free downloads, but said that it stopped working with the affiliates in October 2005.

Keith Smith, Zango's chief executive, said that in previous years "deceptive third parties" did not properly enforce "our consumer notice and consent policies."

"We deeply regret and apologize for the resulting negative impact," he said. Zango said it has abided by the FTC's new notice-and-consent standards since Jan. 1, when it began using new software that can detect the unauthorized installation of its desktop advertising software on a consumer's computer. Under the terms of the settlement, Zango is barred from serving pop-ups or otherwise contacting a consumer's computer if Zango's adware was installed on that computer prior to Jan. 1.

The FTC also prohibited the company from installing software without a consumer's express consent, which it defined as "clear and prominent disclosure" of the terms of the software installation, separate from any end-user license agreement and prior to "consumer activation of the download."

Both Schwartz and Steve Stratz, Zango's spokesman, said the FTC's definition sets a precedent for all companies that offer content for download, from instant-messaging software to toolbars to games.

U.S. Official Urges Stiffer Anti-Spyware Penalties

A member of the U.S. Federal Trade Commission on Monday urged Congress to give the agency more power to penalize purveyors of hidden spyware.

FTC commissioner Jon Leibowitz said the agency should be given expanded authority to impose civil fines on distributors of the software, which often tracks computer users or triggers pop-up ads. It would be similar to the authority the FTC was given in 2003 to penalize computer spammers.

"The civil penalty authority Congress granted us in the (anti-spam law) gave our anti-spam efforts real teeth. Sadly, in spyware cases, we don't yet have that authority," Leibowitz said in prepared remarks given at a conference on the Internet.

Leibowitz, one of five FTC commissioners, gave the speech only days after the FTC announced a settlement with Zango Inc., major online advertising company whose software was secretly loaded onto millions of personal computers, according to the agency.

Zango, formerly named 180solutions Inc., did not admit any legal violations in the settlement announced on Friday. But it apologized and said it had relied too heavily on "deceptive" third-party affiliates.

Under current U.S. law, the FTC can go to court and ask that a company be forced to give up profits it made through unfair or deceptive practices. The agency used that authority to get Zango to repay $3 million as part of the settlement announced on Friday.

Leibowitz said the agency should have the authority to hit violators with additional, civil fines to deter spyware.

"If Congress really wants to enhance consumer protection in the next decade, it needs to come up with a consensus anti-spyware law that gives us the authority to penalize the purveyors of spyware who cause so much consumer harm," Leibowitz said in his prepared speech.

Lawmakers have introduced several anti-spyware bills during the last few years, but none of them ever gained final passage in Congress.

Opponents have raised concerns that such a law would define spyware too broadly and inadvertently outlaw other, legitimate software downloads, such as automatic product updates.

Leibowitz also said the agency should start "naming names" of the companies who pay for the ads that end up being delivered through spyware.

He said the FTC would move a step in that direction by sending out letters to advertisers who used Zango to deliver pop-up ads so that they "will know better than to advertise that way in the future," Leibowitz said in the prepared remarks.

Dell Rolls Out Quad-Core Servers

Dell, which in recent weeks made news for offering AMD processors in more of its systems, Wednesday announced new servers and desktops using hardware from both AMD and Intel.

Texas-based Dell's ninth generation of PowerEdge servers now boasts Intel's quad-core Xeon processors in the 1900, 1950, 2950, 2900, SC1430, and 1955 models. According to Dell, the new two-socket servers have all the power of

prior four-socket models. In fact, Dell claims they outpace the older models in power and speed by more than 60 percent.

Dell’s two-socket Precision Workstation 690 and 490 models also boast Intel’s new quad-core chips, as does the single-socket Precision 390, which offers Intel’s Core 2 Extreme processor.

In a prepared statement, Brad Anderson, senior vice president of Dell’s product group, said the new models will help Dell promote "the benefits of a scale-out architecture, migrating from higher-cost systems with four or more sockets used for enterprise applications to two-socket systems with better price/performance and lower power consumption."

But not all of Dell’s new systems are powered by Intel. One OptiPlex desktop, the OptiPlex 740, sports an AMD Athlon 64 X2 dual-core processor, while a second, the OptiPlex 320, relies on Intel’s Pentium D dual-core processor.

In October, Dell raised eyebrows by releasing a slew of AMD machines, including servers and small business desktops. Until that point, the Red Rock, Texas firm had been one of Intel’s most loyal customers, avoiding AMD at every turn.

Samir Bhavnani, research director at Current Analysis, said that Dell’s recent moves will help AMD in a field where it has been weak to date. "AMD has not done well on what we call the corporate desktop," said Bhavnani. "First of all, it hasn’t been a focus for them, and they haven’t had what’s called a stable roadmap."

But they are making progress, he added. "HP has had great success where it’s offered an AMD system," said Bhavnani, noting that HP and Dell give AMD no small reach as the world’s number one and two makers of business computers, respectively.

According to Bhavnani, AMD chips have yet to reach certain key, if smaller, outlets, including Lenovo and Toshiba notebooks.

Senior analyst Carmi Levy of the Info-Tech Research Group said he thinks that raw demand could change that dynamic over time. "Customers want AMD chips because more choice in any market is always good for them," he said. "Greater competitiveness between AMD and Intel benefits customers by keeping more consistent pressure on prices."

According to Levy, that could free up dollars for other system components. "With Vista looming on the horizon," he said, "a slightly less expensive processor would allow the purchaser to spec out a better video card."

And in the end, customers’ needs are likely to determine Dell’s path. "The bottom line to this whole thing is that customers were asking for AMD," said Bhavnani. "Dell doesn’t really do anything unless its customers ask it to."

Sony Readies Debut of Lightest Vaio Laptop

Sony is gearing up to introduce in December what some are already hailing as the world’s lightest notebook PC.

According to news reports, the Type G Vaio laptop will feature a 12.1-inch display and be considerably lighter, at 1.9 pounds, than its laptop competitors, which typically weigh between four and eight pounds.

The laptop will sell initially in Japan, with a basic model starting at about $1,880.

As of yet, Sony has not announced plans to sell the laptop in any other country.

The company expects that the Type G Vaio will be most popular among business customers.

Sony's focus on Japan as the primary market for the ultralight laptop is indicative of the difference between technology that is popular in the U.S. versus what sells in Japan.

In the U.S., consumers tend to favor low-cost machines even if they are slightly heavier than other models, noted Douglas Krone, chief executive of Dynamism.com, a company that sells imported technology. Those in the U.S. are driven by business needs, he said, and tight budgets tend to favor inexpensive, but more weighty, laptops.

By contrast, Japanese buyers in both the consumer and enterprise realms do not mind spending more - sometimes thousands of dollars more - to get the most cutting-edge technology. And they tend to favor very lightweight machines. "Japan is driven by consumer demand," said Krone. "And they demand the lightest laptops and devices available. Even if they have to spend $3,000 or more, they'll pay it to have the best innovation possible."

Sony's promotion of the new Type G, as well as other new Vaio models, could shift attention away from the company's recent trouble over batteries. PC makers, including Dell and Apple, have recalled more than nine million Sony batteries because of the possibility that the batteries could overheat and catch fire.

The situation sparked widespread concern that the recall could affect Sony's ability to manufacture batteries for new PCs, and could slow its production cycle. But the company has maintained that the recall will have minimal impact on its computer operations.

Microsoft Completes Office 2007

Microsoft Corp. said on Monday it has completed the software code for its Office 2007 suite and will begin to offer the world's most popular package of desktop software to corporate customers on November 30. Microsoft will also make the new Windows Vista operating system and 2007 Exchange e-mail server available to business customers on the same day, and said all the products will become widely available to consumers in early 2007.

By announcing the Microsoft Office 2007 suite was ready for "release to manufacturing," it signals that the product is relatively bug-free and suitable for wide distribution.

"We've crossed the development finish line," said Jeff Raikes, president of Microsoft's business division, in a statement.

In June, Microsoft pushed back the release of its upgrade to Office, which includes the Word processor, Excel spreadsheet and PowerPoint presentation software, marking the latest in a series of development delays that have plagued the company.

Windows Vista and Office 2007 represent major upgrades to Microsoft's two most important products at a time when investors question the software giant's ability to keep up with nimble, faster-growing competitors seeking to offer software over the Internet instead of on the desktop.

Windows and Office together account for more than half of the company's total revenue and nearly all of its profit.

Web search leader Google Inc. already offers online versions of popular Office applications such as word processing, spreadsheets, e-mail and calendar.

Adobe Offers Flash Code to Mozilla

In a move designed to create a broader array of advanced Web applications that are based on the popular Flash format, Adobe is handing over to the Mozilla Foundation some of the key software code used to power the Flash player. Together, the companies plan to use the source code for Adobe's ActionScript Virtual Machine, a Web programming language engine, for an open-source project called Tamarin.

According to Frank Hecker, executive director of Mozilla, this donation, consisting of some 135,000 lines of code, marks the single biggest code contribution to the Mozilla Foundation since its inception three years ago.

The Tamarin project implements the ECMAScript standard used by JavaScript, Adobe ActionScript, and Microsoft JScript - three of the main languages used in creating rich, Web 2.0-style Internet applications.

Hecker noted that Mozilla plans to implement the final version of the ECMAScript 4.0 specification for SpiderMonkey, the core JavaScript engine in Firefox.

"The contribution by Adobe brings together the HTML and Flash development communities around a common language," said Hecker. "As a result, we are encouraging innovation in Web applications and more interactive Web experiences."

Both partners stand to benefit from the collaboration, said Forrester Research senior analyst Jeffrey Hammond.

"Mozilla now has the vast open-source developer community working on Web applications for the Flash player, which will be integrated into Firefox, and becomes part of the extensive Flash ecosystem," he explained. "And Adobe has diffused concerns among developers that there is only one supplier of the Flash runtime engine."

Those developers prefer an open technology, Hammond said.

Hammond compared the situation to Sun's Java. "If Java only worked on Solaris, instead of multiple platforms, it would be a lot less popular. Adobe is taking a similar path with Flash," he noted. "By releasing the

code the ActionScript virtual machine, and Flash, can be taken in new directions."

Hammond also pointed out that Adobe is among a growing number of companies, including Microsoft, IBM, and Oracle, embracing the open-source community.

"Most of the innovations in software development are now coming from that community," he said.

Integrating the Flash player scripting engine technology into Mozilla's browser will take some time, Hecker noted. He projected that it will debut at some point after Firefox 3 rolls out in 2008.

Adobe's Flash player is installed on some 700 million PCs and mobile devices worldwide.

eBay Offers Shopping Index of Hot Items

Online auctioneer eBay Inc. on Friday unveiled a new service that not only lists the top-selling consumer products, but also helps shoppers determine their going prices.

The company, working with data analysis start-up Mpire Inc., said it had created eBay Pop, a shopping index service that helps consumers sniff out the collective purchasing trends of U.S. online buyers.

eBay Pop displays sales trends on top items sold on eBay, ranging from music players, video game consoles and hot toys like TMX Tickle Me Elmo to less-obvious products like election memorabilia or the Fisher Price Kid Tough Digital Camera for preschool kids.

"Think of it as a mini-consumer price index for consumer shopping," said Mpire Chief Executive Matt Hulett.

eBay Pop (http://pages.eBay.com/eBaypop) identifies what it calls "movers" - items that have seen a recent price increase or decrease - and "shakers" - those whose sales volume has risen or fallen significantly.

By tracking the two charts in tandem, consumers can watch popular consumer items that are suddenly falling in price.

"It's like a stock market for product prices," said Gartner Inc. analyst Allen Weiner.

Index categories on the site include fashion, tech gadgets, sports, media, toys and "vintage cool" collectibles.

The service has become possible only as major Internet sites like eBay have begun in recent years to allow other companies to create additional services that run on top of their core market functions.

Founded less than two years ago, Seattle-based Mpire runs a shopping search engine on top of data supplied by major e-commerce sites. It has received financial backing from venture capital firm Ignition Partners and former eBay executive Richard Rock.

Like other shopping sites, Mpire makes money when consumers locate an item

they want via its service and click to buy it.

eBay became famous nearly a decade ago as the place for holiday-season shoppers to find popular Beanie Baby stuffed animals, but it can no longer count on being the sole destination for shoppers to locate hard-to-find gifts.

It has been slower than other big Internet players like Google, Yahoo and Amazon at adopting the latest generation of "WeB 2.0" interactive customer features that encourage audience participation, Weiner said.

eBay is the first company to introduce the Mpire service. Early next year, Mpire will introduce a broader version that works across major shopping sites, including Amazon.com, Yahoo Shopping, Craigslist and more than 2,000 large merchants.

PayPal Plans $20 Rebates To Users

PayPal, the most popular online payment system, on Monday said it will pay up to $100 million in promotional incentives to customers who use the service on up to 100,000 merchant sites in North America.

In a statement, the unit of online marketplace eBay Inc. said millions of PayPal customers will be eligible to receive cash rebate offers of up to $20 when paying with PayPal from November 23 through May 15, 2007.

The PayPal promotion follows speculation earlier this month that Google Inc. was preparing to offer its rival Checkout payment service to merchants for free during the year-end holiday season, in a move to grab market share.

Stifel Nicolaus said that a free promotion move by Google could help the Web search leader wrest merchants and consumers away from PayPal during the crucial holiday season, which accounts for as much as 35 to 40 percent of annual transactions.

More than 200 mid- to large-sized merchants have signed up for Google Checkout, which is a payment processing service rather than a full consumer payments system like PayPal. It typically charges 2 percent plus 20 cents in transaction fees.

Stifel Nicolaus analyst Scott Devitt said in a note to investors on Monday that PayPal’s move was designed to increase the use of PayPal by merchants beyond eBay’s own marketplace, while preempting any move by Google to undercut it. "Competitively, the PayPal promotion is a good move," Devitt said.

Merchants involved include the sites of Barnes & Noble Inc., Dell Inc., Petsmart Inc., Starbucks Corp. and Art.com and a portion of the Hewlett-Packard Co. site, PayPal’s site said.

A free shipping promotion also begins on November 23. Devitt said he expects the shipping offer to expire by mid-December.

Snuppy Passes Torch To YouTube

YouTube, the video-sharing Web site recently acquired by Google Inc. for $1.65 billion, beat out a vaccine that prevents a cancer-causing sexually transmitted disease and a shirt that simulates a hug to grab top honors as Time magazine's "Invention of the Year for 2006."

Time magazine, owned by media conglomerate Time Warner Inc., wrote in an article that YouTube's scale and sudden popularity have changed the rules about how information - along with fame and embarrassment - gets distributed over the Web.

YouTube, which had 27.6 million unique visitors in September, according to Nielsen NetRatings, came along at just the right time, according to Time: social-networking Web sites were hot, camcorders were cheap and do-it-yourself media was expanding beyond text-based blogs.

YouTube inherits the tiara from Snuppy, a cloned puppy and winner of the magazine's 2005 award.

Teens: Email Is Just So Old-Fashioned

Email is for old folks. A new survey by Parks Associates shows that teenagers are less likely to communicate via email than any other demographic.

According to the study, less than one-fifth of the 13-17 year olds surveyed profess to using email to communicate with friends, compared to 40 percent of adults aged 25-54.

The study shows that instant messaging is the dominant form of communication for teenagers, with one-third of teens relying on the messaging system compared to only 11 percent of adults.

"One of the most insightful data points was the one about friends but what we saw about family, it is still a lot of face-to-face communication and phone calls," said John Barrett, director of research for Parks Associates.

Barrett points out that this data does not suggest that email will go the way of the dinosaurs. He estimates the teens will eventually need to learn to use email more as they graduate from school and enter the workforce.

"It's one thing to have this always-on communication when it is people you want to talk to but once you switch to a more professional environment, that delay is nice to have," Barrett said. "So it's a big question on how that will work. I suspect you'll see more of a mix as this generation enters the workforce. Email will remain a way to get in touch but they'll also use instant messaging as well."

This study was part of a larger study called "Digital Media Habits," which was an online survey. It also addressed teens' use of social networking sites for communication, finding that roughly one-third of all teens use these sites daily.

"When you look at the other top five social networking sites, they don't have a distinct user base," Barrett said. "People who have a MySpace account also have a Friendster account or a Facebook account so it's interesting that all the kids are using the same site, which is MySpace."

Barrett said that this phenomenon is simply the way this generation handles multiple messages simultaneously.

"I think it is about multitasking," he said. "Younger kids are more likely to sit there and type on a computer while they're watching TV and talking on the phone. I think the younger generation is just adapting to this environment where they're doing 10 things at once."

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